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THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING.

By invitation of the Library Committee and Corporation of Cambridge, supported by distinguished members of the University, the annual meeting of the Library Association was held at Cambridge from August 21st to 25th, 1905, under the chairmanship of the new President, Dr. Francis Jenkinson, M.A., the University Librarian. Over 250 members and delegates attended the meetings, which commenced with a reception in the Guildhall on Monday evening, the guests being received by the Mayor and Mayoress (Alderman and Mrs. Campkin), and by the Chairman of the Library Committee and Miss Bowes. Peculiar interest attached to the visit of the Association to Cambridge this year, inasmuch as Mr. John Pink was celebrating the attainment of his fiftieth year in the capacity of Borough Librarian—an event which coincided with the jubilee of the Cambridge Public Library.

The business part of Tuesday's proceedings was held in the Guildhall in the morning, when a crowded audience assembled. The chief feature was, of course, the Presidential Address, which was devoted largely to an account of the fifteenth century books in the University Library. Dr. Jenkinson did not forget to pay a tribute to the memory of his predecessor, Mr. Henry Bradshaw, and the part he had taken in bringing together these interesting volumes.

A paper by Mr. J. Pink, the Borough Librarian, entitled "After Fifty Years: a retrospect of the Cambridge Public Libraries," was taken as read, printed copies being distributed; and Mr. H. G. Aldis, M.A., Secretary of the University Library, read a paper on the organisation and methods of the Cambridge University Library.

Mr. H. R. Tedder, F.S.A., presented the "Second report of the Committee on public education and public libraries," embodying six resolutions indicating the best and most practical lines on which co-operative work between library and educational authorities should proceed. The sixth and perhaps most important resolution reads: "That the public library should be recognised as forming part of the national educational machinery." The report was adopted, and the following additional resolution was also carried: "That the Conference presses upon library authorities the importance (1) of providing a room in every library for lectures, discussions, etc., and (2) of enrolling their librarians as honorary members of the National Home Reading Union, in order that they might receive the book lists and magazines of the Society."

The Wednesday morning session was opened with a lecture by Mr. Cyril J. Davenport, F.S.A. (British Museum), on "Bookbinding and book production," followed by Mr. J. Willis Clark, M.A., Registrar of the University, who gave a deeply interesting account of the evolution of the bookcase, which he traced from Roman to present times. Mr. E. R. Norris Matthews (Bristol) contributed a paper on "Library binderies" in which he advocated binding being done on the library

premises. Mr. C. Chivers supplemented this with a paper on "Library bookbinding," urging that more attention should be paid to the sewing, and submitting the result of an experiment to show that it was more economical to have a book properly bound direct from the quires than to purchase in publisher's case and re-bind later.

At the afternoon session, Mr. L. Inkster (Battersea) read a paper on "Library grouping." He said the leading idea was that the time had now come to consider whether it was not desirable and possible to give to the library movement a more orderly and systematic direction than it had hitherto attained. A central authority in each county to control all libraries not included in the larger municipal areas was suggested. Mr. John Ballinger (Cardiff) then read an excellent paper on "Library politics," advising local conferences between library and educational authorities; more library extension work; the removal of certain restrictions in library administration, and more liberal legislation. In the discussion which followed, Mr. Councillor Abbott (Manchester) moved a resolution approving the policy set forth in the paper and requesting the L.A. Council to arrange three quarterly meetings as suggested, to be held in different centres before the next annual meeting. Mr. Tedder seconded, and the resolution was carried by a large majority.

The first item on Thursday morning's programme was a discussion on "Newsrooms: are they desirable?" Mr. C. W. Sutton (Manchester) opened in the affirmative, and Mr. J. A. Charlton Deas (Sunderland) took the negative view. A good discussion ensued, an overwhelming number favouring newsrooms, but it was agreed that there was room for improvement in their management and in the selection of periodicals. This was followed by a paper on "Sunday opening" by Mr. A. Capel Shaw (Birmingham). In the afternoon a joint conference on "Library planning" was held, at which papers were read by Mr. H. T. Hare, vice-president, Royal Institute of British Architects, and Mr. F. J. Burgoynes (Lambeth). In the evening the annual dinner was held in the King's College Hall. During the evening Mr. L. Inkster, the late Hon. Secretary, was presented with a service of plate upon his retirement from that office.

The proceedings concluded on Friday, when the events arranged were purely social, including an excursion to Ely. Thus ended a busy, and, it is to be hoped, beneficial Conference.

Alderman Tootill, of Bradford, and Baillie J. S. Maxwell, of Glasgow, attended the Conference and offered the Association a cordial invitation to these places in 1906 and 1907 respectively.

SYDNEY A. HATCHER.

THE COMMITTEE.

A meeting of the Committee was held at St. George-in-the-East Public Library on Wednesday evening, August 17th, when there were present Messrs. W. G. Chambers (in the chair), Dallimore, Faraday, Green, Hogg, Rees, Roebuck, Sayers, Smith, Sureties and Thorne.

The programme for next Session was considered, and ordered to be printed in the October journal.

Arrangements were made for carrying into effect the resolution passed at the annual meeting for co-opting a junior representation on the Committee, and other formal business—including the question of the Annual Dinner—was dealt with.

The next meeting was fixed for September 20th.

THINGS WE MAY EXPECT.

By W. C. BERWICK SAYERS.

There is no more interesting leisure-time study for an English library assistant than that of American library reports. Now, I am not going to wax enthusiastic over things American, although we must recognise in their organization, their methods, their buildings, their painfully gushing enthusiasm, and lastly, their incomes and corresponding pay rolls, an ideal towards which we are only approximating as yet. But at present American librarianship is suffering from over-emphasis of the trivial; one library issuing typed broadsides exhorting the children to pick up all stray pieces of banana-rind they find in the streets; another telling with manifest pride of "the little dears" who, "overcome by drowsiness, go to sleep, with the book face-downwards on their knees," in the children's room. An I were a disciple of Schopenhauer I could find a reason for it; but I will not be so ungallant as to suggest anything more unkind to the lady librarian than that there is too much of her in the American library, and—well, you know what Mr. Cropland says happens when the lady is allowed to run the universe. Having made the preliminary insular growl which is always the Briton's privilege, I will hark back to my first point, that American library reports are the best on earth, and that we cannot afford to neglect them.

I think librarians should be submitted to a course of instruction in report-writing. One wonders why a report is issued. First, of course, it is to prove that the library is a statistic-making machine; and to show other librarians that "our library" is far ahead of all others in creation in getting so many pounds avoirdupois of printed matter across the counter per diem. Therefore we gather together piles of figures representing the issues of the last fifty years, and print them, presumably for the public; which said public does not care a rap about them, and as a return, never looks at them except to find the fiction percentage too high and to agitate about the depravity caused by an unlimited supply of Guy Boothby and men of that ilk. Whereas the actual report matter—the literary matter—which might be made interesting even to the general reader, is cut down to the baldest essentials. This is where we can learn from America. Without troubling your brains about their statistic columns, you read the text of their reports and receive quite an instruction in methods.

The weather-wise will tell you that weather experienced in New York is generally experienced later in a modified degree on this side of the Atlantic. And because I believe their library practice as their weather is a prophecy of ours, I am inclined to remark on a few of their activities which have a meaning for us.

My sarcasm a moment ago was directed against an exaggeration of the most emphasised part of trans-Atlantic library work—the work with and for children. The open-access children's library, juvenile reading rooms, school libraries, the story-hour, picture bulletins, flower-days, bird-days, are all evidences of the enthusiasm for this work. The flower-day is rather difficult to connect with librarianship. It was a despatching of all the children in the upper classes of the elementary schools to gather wild flowers and to bring them to the children's room of the library. There hundreds of bouquets were displayed and labelled, making a brilliant exhibition of all the native flora of the district then in bloom. Brief lectures on the flowers were given during the day, and at its close the flowers were distributed among the local hospitals. When I read this account I was inclined to curl superior lips at it; but there was a saving clause. The issue of books continued in the room throughout the show day, and as hundreds of children came to the flower show, so hundreds who never came near on ordinary occasions were brought into

contact with the library. As librarianship this is absolute nonsense, but as a library advertisement for children it surpasses anything I can think of. This is what they do in America. And we? Why, I can imagine the inarticulate amazement with which the average British librarian would receive the suggestion of such a meeting at his library. Yet, wriggle as we may, the clear-headed logic of it all is unanswerable. The book we all reverence and seldom read says: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." In America they catch the children by hook or by crook; the lady librarian goes to the schools and talks about the libraries to the youngsters; and coming back to the library she sits on the floor with a score or more of them and tells them the story of Camelot, of Achilles, or some other great place or figure of romance; they send books to the schools, they coax or worry the teachers into active sympathy; and they provide gaily decorated rooms at the library and a supply of books suitable to all children from the A B C picture-book to adventures that older boys and girls delight in. The children's room is a palace of pleasure to the children; it has flags, bulletins—i.e., pictures with poems and lists of books—flowers and ferns in various corners; and the books are arranged all round the walls on open shelves so that the youngster can range at liberty where he will. Contrast this with our juvenile rooms: To begin with they are generally the worst in the building, they have no pictures, no open shelves, and the idea of a flower-pot in the room to contaminate the atmosphere would startle our strange conservatism. Nor does this apply only to the children's rooms, but to all. Our one idea seems to be to produce a building which is evidently a public building, severe, ascetic, and as hospitable as Wormwood Scrubbs. We forget that as a mere business axiom every square foot of the library should be attractive, even though we become slightly ludicrous at times, as do our American cousins. Then their work with the schools and their libraries is co-ordinated all through. Here, in Britain, we have school libraries and omit the juvenile department at the library; or we have the juvenile department at the library and neglect the schools. Again, the town with the largest system of school libraries in this country, has the absurd age limit of sixteen years at the public library. The child leaves school at thirteen, becomes an errand boy or faces the world in some other way, and by the time he is sixteen all that the school libraries commenced in him has been forgotten, and the public library has absolutely no meaning for him. What we need is a definite connection between the school and the library; in fact, school libraries and well-equipped juvenile departments run side by side, with assistants in the latter who have even advanced as far as to study child psychology, who have learned the means of approach to the child mind, and know how to apply that knowledge to their work in the library.

Then the Americans have "library classes." I believe these have been held at Cardiff, but I am unable to learn that any other library in Britain has followed Cardiff's example. These are another means of co-ordination. The upper classes in the elementary schools are brought to the library, a class at a time, and have the mysteries of classification, call numbers, and, most important of all, the card catalogues explained to them. The youngsters are taught the meanings of main headings and sub-divisions, and the technical terms which are so freely used in our catalogues and are understood by nobody but ourselves. They are taught to use subject indexes; to refer from one topic to cognate topics; how to find books in their sequence on the shelves; and if the "young idea" of the U.S.A. does not understand that 973 B 01 is Bancroft's "America," and that the number is made up by the Dewey number 973, General United States histories, followed by the author's initial, which in turn is followed by a decimal number for alphabetizing purposes, it is because he

hasn't taken the trouble to understand, not because it has not been often and lucidly explained to him. Look at the logic of this work, too. Here, in our own country, the class catalogue is gradually superseding the dictionary. At the present moment I have in mind the excellent class lists issued by the Newcastle-on-Tyne and the Brighton libraries—lists as admirable, I venture to think, as any that have proceeded from America. Yet I also venture to think that a majority of readers would still prefer catalogues of the Haggerston dictionary type, simply because they won't take the trouble or haven't the gumption to understand a class-list. This is not always the case, but admitting it to be so, I see no reason for returning to the dictionary form. We must educate our readers in the use of the catalogue which we know will ultimately prove the most useful to every type of reader, and particularly to the student. It is here that the utility of the library class is evident. Train the boy in the use of the class-list, and it will become second nature to him to use it. We are constantly told that the readers won't understand this and won't understand that, and yet we do not take this most obvious way of "making" and training our public library reader. A generation of the work I have indicated would lead to a proper use of and reverence for libraries, and yet we will not do this work because it does not produce immediate results. These are things we as assistants should remember: that librarianship needs men who will work unselfishly for the future of their profession; who will bring a little of the spirit and enthusiasm of Edward Edwards into the details of practical work.

I have gone on farther than I intended, and have only touched on one aspect of comparison—work for the young. And it is because I believe this work to be of paramount importance to the future of our profession that I have insisted upon it here. The outlook in librarianship, despite the gloomy apprehensions of some people, is to my mind quite optimistic. A very few years will decide whether we are to drop out of existence, or to be more generously recognised. As the first suggestion is unthinkable we may look and work for the latter. From time to time the possibility of libraries coming under the control of the education authorities, and being administered as part of the education system of the country, has been hinted at. These very hints are a suggestion that the school and the library are co-workers which in future shall exist side by side, each necessary to the other; and, in view of this, the British library assistant must train himself to meet such a state should it ever come about.

MR. GREENWOOD'S GIFT.

With reference to Mr. Greenwood's gift of fifty copies of his Life of Edward Edwards, reported in our last issue, the Committee have had under consideration the best means of allocating the books, and have decided—in order that London and country members may have an equal chance—to distribute them by ballot. Each member who is desirous of having a copy should make application by post-card to the Hon. Sec., Mr. G. E. Roe buck, 236, Cable-street, E., not later than September 16th. The names thus received will be pooled, and a draw will take place at the inaugural meeting in October. The names of the successful applicants will be published in the November journal.

THE MONASTIC HISTORIANS.

In connection with the article on "The Monastic Historians" which appeared in our last number, Mr. Kent has furnished us with a list of some of the authorities consulted in the preparation of the article. To the authorities named Mr. Kent acknowledges his indebtedness, and as the

list may prove useful to some assistants who may have been stimulated to seek for further information on the subject, we print it below:—

The early chroniclers of Europe: England, by James Gairdner.
Introduction to the study of English history, by Samuel R. Gardiner and J. Bass Mullinger.
Descriptive catalogue of materials relating to the history of Great Britain and Ireland, by Sir Thomas D. Hardy.
Catalogue of romances in the department of manuscripts in the British Museum, by H. L. D. Ward.
Dictionary of national biography. And, those volumes of chronicles mentioned in the body of the paper that are included in the Rolls series.

A FAMOUS EXPERIMENT IN BOOKSELLING.

By H. WILFRED CHECKETTS, University Library, Birmingham.

The greatness of any man can be roughly estimated by the amount of literature that has been written about him. Most bibliographers and librarians will agree that *ana*, whether it be good, bad, or indifferent, is an almost infallible guide to a man's position in his particular sphere of activity. While the *littérateur* and *savant* are discussing whether a particular author's work will live, the humble cataloguer can solve the question from practical experience. When, therefore, one attempts to say something more about Ruskin—whose greatness, according to our professional standard, runs to the extent of a quarterly journal—one almost feels guilty of a literary crime, but yet there may be some to whom Ruskin is little more than a name, and it is possible that any such would be attracted to his more permanent work if they found that he had some interest for them in matters bookish.

The new complete edition of Ruskin's writings will consist of more than thirty large octavo volumes. This represents an immense amount of labour; and it is only to be expected that the man whose experience was thus extensive should have acquired certain opinions upon the relations which exist between author and publisher. The general controversy is an old one, but Ruskin was the first to translate words into deeds, and to become the autocrat of his own literary productions.

Until the year 1871 Messrs. Smith and Elder were the publishers of his books. These included all the first editions of his works on art, as well as the earlier volumes on social economy. It is not to be assumed that Ruskin experienced greater difficulties with his publishers than did other authors with theirs, though it is probable that he was less amenable to argument than the average writer can afford to be. His quarrel was with the whole system by which the book market was governed.

When one is dissatisfied with any system the working of which involves one's own person, the most obvious way of expressing disapproval is by becoming as separate and independent of it as possible. This perfectly natural course was the one Ruskin determined to adopt. He was planning a series of open letters to the working men of England, in which his views—then scorned as heretical and absurd—on political and social subjects should be expounded. On more than one occasion he had been told by opponents that his ideas were impracticable—nay, even more, that he made no attempt to carry them out in his personal relations with the social system. The charge contained sufficient truth to do some damage, but was certainly unfair. It was soon seen to be absolutely false so far as the minor matter of book-production was concerned, as the letters to working men were issued on the author's terms and under the author's method of publishing.

Mr. George Allen had become acquainted with Ruskin at the Working Men's College. As an engraver and artist, Mr. Allen had come under the favourable notice and friendship of the great art-critic, and it was

arranged that he should have the oversight and management of the experiment. A warehouse was established at the back of Mr. Allen's house at Orpington, Kent, and this was the only place at which books could be obtained.

The monthly letters, under the title of *Fors Clavigera*, were at first issued at sevenpence a copy. Ruskin, as first producer, made himself responsible for the quality of the book, "paper, binding, eloquence, and all." He would not permit any discount or abatement of any kind. From his point of view nothing could be fairer or more straightforward. He undertook to provide a sound article at a cost which should cover all necessary expenses, without being troubled by the usual accessories of advertisements and middlemen. The workmen employed were fully paid, and all materials used in the book itself were of the best. He explains his scheme as follows:—"It costs me £10 to print 1,000 copies, £5 more to give you a picture, and a penny off my 7d. to send you the book; a thousand sixpences are £25; when you have bought a thousand *Fors* of me I shall therefore have £5 for my trouble, and my single shopman, Mr. Allen, for his. We won't work for less, either of us, and I mean to sell all my large books, henceforward, in the same way: well-printed, well-bound, and at a fixed price, and the trade may charge a proper and acknowledged profit for their trouble in retailing the book. . . . That is what I call legitimate business."

Up to a certain point, of course, this was all very well, but it can hardly be claimed that it was adapted to suit the public convenience. The ordinary individual had no inducement to purchase; not even the simplest of publisher's advertisements was permitted; and every copy had to be obtained from Orpington. It was only by hearsay that any knowledge could be gleaned as to the existence of the books, and the regular bookseller found it impossible to make a profit without selling above the published price. Yet thousands of copies of each number of *Fors* were sold, a sufficient testimony, surely, to the important position Ruskin held as a thinker and critic.

The price of *Fors Clavigera* was afterwards raised to tenpence. Then came a "Revised Series" of works already completed, and they were published under the double imprint of Messrs. Smith, Elder and Co.—who were still the printers—and Mr. George Allen. The same terms held good, but the volumes were of course much more expensive than the parts of *Fors*. A fine purple calf was the only binding, and the general get-up was most sumptuous. Thirteen shillings was the price of an unbound volume, and twenty-two shillings and sixpence if there were illustrations.

As was to be expected, the trade made a great outcry against methods so cumbersome and unusual. "Mr. Ruskin has transferred his publishing to the middle of a country field" was the contemptuous remark made by one of their principal organs. "Unjustifiable," "nothing but a swindle," were terms not at all uncommon. Ruskin, however, was not deterred, and eventually succeeded in reaching a position whence he could not be dislodged. At first, indeed, his condition was somewhat precarious. He had disposed of the greater part of his large fortune in benefactions and schemes for social improvement. And in Letter LXII. of *Fors* he tells us that his entire profit on all the books then published, after paying salaries and other expenses, was only fifty pounds for the year. He further admits, in the same letter, that he is living much beyond his private income.

After a time, however, his perseverance was rewarded. For several of the later years of his life he was receiving no less than £4,000 per annum, as clear profit from the sale of his books. This would be con-

sidered a highly satisfactory royalty by any author, though it should be remembered that Ruskin had then become entirely dependent upon it for a living.

The somewhat primitive method of publishing thus adopted could hardly be expected to continue without some modification. Eventually an establishment was opened in London, and business was conducted on lines more in accordance with the regular traditions of publishing. But even now, the principle underlying Ruskin's original experiment has been retained; and the alterations that have been made are merely superficial, and only affect the accessibility of books to the public. Before his death, Ruskin had come to see the unwisdom of increasing the cost of a book and thereby diminishing the area of its influence and usefulness. And just recently an edition of *Sesame and Lilies* has been placed on the market at one shilling.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the famous experiment—to the literary student, at any rate—is the light it throws on the more human side of a great man. Anyone who is acquainted with the nature, temperament, and training of Ruskin will recognise in this incident of his career, not so much a mere technical expedient, as an illustration of his personal characteristics of dogmatism, perfect integrity, and steady obstinacy. There is a sense of devotion to impossible ideals that excites sympathy at its apparent quixotism, rather than amusement at its absurdity. Truly, matters of this kind, comparatively uninspiring and ordinary though they be, are yet indices to the greater things which mark a man in the eyes of his fellows.

THE DISPLAY AND FILING OF PERIODICALS.

By H. G. SURETIES, Hornsey Public Libraries.

The efficient management and display of a general reading room is a matter the importance of which librarians do not always fully appreciate, and yet it is a subject worth consideration. To many librarians the question of an orderly and systematic arrangement of the contents of the general reading-room is of minor importance, hence the number of untidy reading-rooms to be seen in our public libraries. Any system which is an attempt to evolve law and order out of the chaos existing in many cases is to be commended as a step in the right direction. It is notorious that news-rooms attract a lower and less desirable class of frequenter, and when to this is added an ill-kept and untidy room, the result is not always gratifying. News-rooms are almost entirely British institutions. In no other country are they recognised to any great extent as an essential adjunct to a public library. With the advent of cheaper and probably inferior newspaper literature, it is possible that we are approaching the time when the importance of news-rooms, purely as a necessary or unnecessary adjunct to the public library of the future, will have to be reconsidered. Until that time the question of newspaper provision and accommodation must perforce be considered and studied.

There is but one effective method of displaying newspapers, and that is on stands or slopes. For various reasons the system of allocating newspapers on fixed slopes around the walls of a general reading-room has considerable advantages over stands standing at right angles to the walls. In the former system the slopes are fixed, and consequently can be included in the building loan; news-stands not being fixtures must be included in the furniture loan, a consideration when it is remembered that building loans are for 30 and furniture loans for but 10 years. Another important consideration is that by this system complete oversight is assured and supervision made easy: a considerable advantage. Oversight in a news-room with stands at right-angles to the walls is an utter impossibility.

Slopes should be made to project 15in. from the walls; 18in. should be the maximum. Each slope should be provided with a title-board on which the name of the paper or periodical should appear in black letters $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2in. high, and the board should be moveable to admit of changes if desired. A stout brass rail should be affixed to the slopes to be used as a rest; this will be found useful in protecting newspapers from being damaged.

Newspapers may be classified under the following heads:—

1. London dailies.
2. London evening papers.
3. London weeklies.
4. Provincial papers.
5. Local papers (dailies, weeklies, and bi-weeklies).

From this rough division it will be found possible to vary the papers considerably. The endeavour should be to diversify the order as much as possible. No two papers of any of the above named classes should be put side by side. To cite an example we will imagine an order of this description: (1) "The Times"; (2) "Blankshire News" (local); (3) "Birmingham Post"; (4) "The Sphere" (or "Weekly Despatch"); (5) "Westminster Gazette"; (6) A London daily again, and so on. By this means congestion is avoided, and readers are distributed as evenly as possible around the room. With wall slopes I am inclined to think that gas or electric light brackets over the slopes will be found preferable to pendants. There will be less possibility of shadows caused by readers standing in their own light. To each slope a bold letter or number should be assigned, as well as a small tablet on which the "10 minutes rule" should be inscribed.

There are various forms of display of magazines and periodicals. Those usually adopted are:—

(1) The alphabetical system. This can hardly be called a system, as it merely consists of arranging the periodicals in cases in alphabetical order each morning, and at certain times of the day. This primitive "system" may be dismissed without further notice.

(2) The indicator system is an undoubted improvement on the first system. Magazines are kept behind a counter and issued by an assistant in charge on application. The indicator is a frame containing a printed title list of all periodicals, newspapers, etc. Opposite each title is a small round hole into which fit pegs, coloured white and black at the ends. The presence of the black end of the peg opposite a periodical intimates that the particular periodical is in use, and therefore unavailable, while the presence of the white end of the peg intimates that the periodical is available for reading. The objection to this system is that an assistant has to be told off to look after the issuing of the periodicals at the counter, unless the magazine room is worked in conjunction with the reference library. I am inclined to think, too, that the fact of having to ask for a magazine may have a deterring effect on the would-be reader. On the other hand, there is no doubt that the system has its advantages where space is limited.

(3) The third system is the rack system. This consists of the provision of a rack in which the magazines are displayed in cases lettered on the outside with the name of the periodical. Readers simply take the magazine required from the rack, returning the same when done with. As they do not always return the magazine to the rack, but leave it on the table, its claim as a system is minimised. The system has the advantage, however, of requiring less room than that we are about to describe.

(4) The fourth system is probably the best and most effective. Tables are provided to accommodate 8 persons, 4 on each side. These tables should be 3ft. wide, 32in. high, and allow 2ft. clear for each chair. They should be provided with a dwarf screen down the centre, which may also be utilised as a rest for the periodical, and in addition a ledge to prevent the periodical sliding off the table. The provision of this ledge will be found to be absolutely essential where the tables have sloping tops.

Disposition of the periodicals will require care and thought. On the whole the best arrangement is a classified one, and to preserve the order periodicals should be attached to the table by cords. There is a considerable advantage in a fixed location. It is a decided convenience to be able to go to a particular table, with the certainty of knowing at once whether the particular magazine is available or in actual use, to say nothing of the saving of time to not only the public but the administrative staff as well. With regard to the classification of the periodicals there is much to be said for arranging together all periodicals, etc., of a given subject. Admittedly it must be a convenience to, say, a builder, to find all the building periodicals together, without having to go to two or three different tables to find them. With this object in view the classification will be laid down somewhat on these lines:—

Table 1. Art Periodicals.

- " 2. Science Periodicals.
- " 3. Domestic Periodicals.
- " 4. Financial, Municipal and Economic Periodicals.
- " 5. Trade Periodicals.

Table 6. Literary Periodicals.

- " 7. Dramatic and Musical Periodicals.
- " 8. Theological and Theosophical Periodicals.
- " 9. Travel, etc.
- " 10. Miscellaneous Periodicals.

To each table should be affixed, in an upright position, a neatly framed card bearing the titles of the periodicals of each particular table, and a number or letter which denotes the table.

A general reading-room has always a quantity of the lesser known periodicals of ephemeral interest. To provide cases for all these is an extravagant and short-sighted policy; therefore a periodical rack should be provided for them. The key to the whole room is a periodical indicator. This should be displayed in a prominent position and as near the entrance as possible. Periodicals and newspapers will be arranged in this indicator alphabetically according to titles, with a symbol opposite to each title forming a guide to the location of the newspapers and magazines. Thus, C would direct to the counter, R to the rack, and numbers or letters to the slopes or tables.

For the filing of newspapers enlarged "pigeon holes" of varying sizes should be provided in the store or file-room. These can be made to take 1, 2 or 3 years' papers as required. It is not likely, except in a very few cases, that more room than is sufficient to take 3 years' papers will be required. The floor of each "pigeon hole" should be provided with a 3in. board to facilitate the easy removal of the papers. Stout brown paper, cut to the size of the mouth of each "pigeon hole," and affixed by paste to the upper division, thus covering the front of each opening, will not only serve as a dust preventor but also as an indicator of the contents, as the name and year of the newspaper can be displayed in bold lettering. Periodicals require different treatment. For these, cloth boxes, made with a celluloid holder attached outside to take the title, will be best. They should be made to take a volume of the periodical, and conse-

quently will vary in size according to the thickness of the periodical and the number that go to the volume. The boxes should be arranged on shelves in alphabetical sequence, and should be easily accessible.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Aberystwyth.—The foundation stone of the new public library presented by Mr. Carnegie was laid on July 28th. The building is to cost £3,000, and provides a lending library to accommodate 10,000 volumes on the open-access system, news-room, reference library with shelving for 2,000 volumes, magazine room, etc.

British Museum.—Sir Edmund Maunde Thompson has had the honour of submitting to the King the plans for the British Museum extension.

Dudley.—Mr. Carnegie has offered £7,500 for a public library at Dudley, and it is probable that the offer will be accepted.

East Ham.—Mr. James Bryce, M.P., on Thursday, August 3rd, opened one of the two libraries presented by Mr. Carnegie. In the course of his remarks Mr. Bryce said: "Books always appear to me to be best defined as being the preserved essence of thought, and a row of books is somewhat like a row of bottles in which the best thoughts of the previous centuries have been distilled and concentrated, and ranged in volume form for use and benefit." Referring to the "100 best books" craze Mr. Bryce said: "It is just as impossible to prescribe 100 books for everybody as it is to prescribe the same diet for a number of people living in different climates, and with different physical temperaments. Everybody should try and find out the books they find most useful, and then indulge in that study for which they are most naturally inclined. Reading is one of the most enduring pleasures; it is a pleasure which lasts through life, a pleasure which none of the vicissitudes of life can destroy, and a pleasure which affords a solace and a refuge among those vexations and regrets which life brings to all."

King's Norton.—The foundation-stones of three libraries to be erected within the King's Norton and Northfield urban area have been formally laid at King's Heath, Stirchley and Selly Oak.

Malvern.—A public library, the joint gift of Mr. Carnegie and Mr. Dysons Perrins is now being erected. The front part of the site, which is a large one, is to be laid out as a public garden. A children's reading-room is to be provided in the basement.

Portadown.—This new Carnegie Library was opened on August 1st. The building has a 60ft. frontage, and provides lending and reference libraries, reading-room, ladies' room and librarian's office. Each room is provided with fresh air inlet tubes, and shafts for the extraction of foul air, which are carried through the roof to a Boyle's patent air-pump ventilator.

St. Pancras.—Matters are proceeding apace in this important borough. For the purpose of a central library the Borough Council have acquired the freehold of a site of 29,000 feet in Prince of Wales's Road for £10,500. Also the freehold of a site in Chester Road, Highgate New Town, for a branch library. Other branch libraries are to be erected in the neighbourhood of Euston Road, High Street, Camden Town, and Gospel Oak.

Sandown.—Lord Alverstoke recently opened the new public library, provided through the instrumentality of Mr. Carnegie.

Wrexham.—The "Building News" of August 11th publishes plans and elevation views of the design selected out of 104 sets submitted for the new public library.

West Ham.—Mr. J. Passmore Edwards recently opened the new public library in Prince Regent's Lane, West Ham. This, the fourth library that has been established in the borough, was built and furnished at a cost of £5,000, contributed by Mr. Carnegie, the ground being provided by the local authorities. In declaring the building open, Mr. Passmore Edwards congratulated the committee on their perseverance in the work of building libraries. The great competition in trade nowadays, he said, was a competition of mind, and some nations had recognised this more than we had in England.

NEW MEMBERS.

Juniors.—Messrs. W. H. FOSTALL, Bromley, Kent; A. W. LOCKYEAR, Plumstead; F. WAKEMAN, Kidderminster; and J. WHITEHEAD, Greenock.

APPOINTMENT.

Pocock, Mr. Frank, Assistant, Holborn, to be Librarian, Hanwell Public Library.

ADDRESSES.

Chairman and Hon. Treasurer—Mr. W. Geo. Chambers, Public Library, Plumstead (Telephone—45 Woolwich).

Hon. Secretary—Mr. Geo. E. Roebuck, St. George's Library, 236, Cable Street, E.

Hon. Secretary Education Sub-Committee—Mr. W. C. Berwick Sayers, Public Library, Croydon (Telephone—394 Croydon).

Hon. Librarian—Mr. A. H. Carter Public Library, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

Matter for the October number should reach the Editor not later than September 20th.

